COACHING AUSTRALIA

Powerful Questioning for Leaders

Coaching questions to help you understand more deeply and spark better conversations

Powerful Questioning for Leaders

With engagement falling, burnout rising, and managers under pressure, one of the most valuable tools a leader has is a great question — followed by genuine listening.

Here are simple, high-impact questions to try in 1:1s, team meetings, or informal catch-ups. Start with one or two and notice the shift in conversations.

Questions to Explore Engagement & Wellbeing

Gallup Themes: Low engagement, Burnout, Stress

- What's been energising you at work lately?
- When do you feel most motivated in your role?
- How's your workload feeling right now — and what would make it feel more manageable?
- What's one thing we could stop, start, or continue that would improve your week?

Questions to Strengthen Connection & Trust

Gallup Themes: Manager Disengagement, Lack of Recognition

- What's one thing you'd like me to understand about your current priorities?
- How do you prefer to receive feedback or recognition?
- What's something we've done recently that's made you feel valued?
- If you were in my role, what's one thing you'd focus on?

Questions to Reduce Silos & Increase Collaboration

Gallup Themes: Working in Silos, Lack of Peer Support

- What's a project or idea that could benefit from fresh perspectives?
- Where do you feel disconnected from other parts of the organisation?
- What's one thing we could do to make cross-team work easier?
- Is there someone whose work you admire that you'd like to learn from?

Broader Everyday Coaching Questions

For Growth, Clarity & Ownership

- What's the real challenge for you here?
- What options do you see?
- What's one step you could take this week?
- What's important to you about this?
- How will you know you've been successful?

Tips for Leaders Trying this Out

- **Ask, then pause** — give people space to think.
- **Listen for meaning, not just facts** — notice tone, energy, and what's not being said.
- **Follow curiosity** — a great follow-up is simply, "Tell me more."
- **Don't rush to fix** — sometimes the question is the intervention.